

REMARKS

Claims 5, 7-21, and 26-30 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 5, 7, 11-13, 15-16, and 18 are amended, claims 6 and 22-24 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 26-30 are added. The Examiner withdrew from consideration claims 22-24. To expedite prosecution of the application, these claims have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amended claims is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution without incorporating additional subject matter; (3) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and/or (4) place the application in better form for appeal, if necessary. Entry is thus requested.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 8-10, 13-14, and 16-19 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 8 has not been rewritten in independent form at this time for the reasons set forth below. However, claims 13, 16, and 18 have been rewritten in independent form as new claims 25, 27, and 29. Accordingly,

these claims should be in condition for allowance along with claims 26, 28, and 30, which depend respectively therefrom.

The Office Action rejected claims 6-11 and 12-19 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particular point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Each of the Examiner's comments have been addressed in amending the claims. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejected claims 5, 12, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Weber et al. (hereinafter "Weber"), U.S. Patent No. 5,725,140. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 5 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, a drive system comprising a forward and backward rotational force generating device in communication with and configured to drive each of the parts feeding unit, the vinyl separation unit, and the vinyl recovery unit. Weber fails to disclose or suggest at least these features, and the combination thereof. In contrast, Weber discloses a tape feeder for a surface mount placement system. The tape feeder 12 is driven by a drive system comprising a sprocket wheel 50 with teeth 51, ratchet wheel 52, and a plurality of linkages and cam interactions (see, for example, Figure 8A of Weber and col. 4, line 23 through col. 5, line 45 of Weber). More particularly, a sprocket linkage 54 engages the ratchet wheel 52 to rotate the sprocket wheel 50. A pawl 58 is biased by a spring 59 against the teeth of the ratchet wheel 52 to prevent counterclockwise rotation of the ratchet wheel 52 and sprocket wheel 50. However, Weber does not disclose or suggest a drive system comprising a

forward and backward rotational force generating device in communication with and configured to drive each of the parts feeding unit, the vinyl separation unit, and the vinyl recovery unit, as recited in independent claim 5, or the claimed combination.

Accordingly, the rejection of independent claim 5 over Weber should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 12 and 20 are allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 5, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejected claims 5-6, 11-12, 15, and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Hawkswell, U.S. Patent No. 4,687,152. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As indicated above, independent claim 5 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, a drive system comprising a forward and backward rotational force generating device in communication with and configured to drive each of the parts feeding unit, the vinyl separation unit, and the vinyl recovery unit. Hawkswell at least fails to disclose or suggest such features, and the combination thereof. In contrast, Hawkswell discloses a machine for handling electrical components. A drive wheel 52 drives a sprocket wheel 44 via a drive belt 48 to feed the tape 40. A ratchet wheel (not shown) rotates with the drive wheel 52 to drive the tape assembly 38, 40. A spring member 56 engages with the ratchet wheel to prevent it from rotating in a direction opposite to the feed direction (see col. 3, line 67 through col. 5, line 15 of Hawkswell). However, Hawkswell does not disclose or suggest a drive system comprising a forward and backward rotational force generating device in communication with and configured to drive each

of the parts feeding unit, the vinyl separation unit, and the vinyl recovery unit, as recited in independent claim 5, or the claimed combination.

The Office Action rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber or Hawkswell. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claim 7 is allowable over both Weber and Hawkswell for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 5, from which claim 7 depends, as well as for its added features. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber or Hawkswell in view of Witte, U.S. Patent No. 6,162,007. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claim 21 is allowable over Weber and Hawkswell for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 5, from which claim 21 depends, as well as for its features. Further, Witte fails to overcome the deficiencies of Weber and Hawkswell discussed above, as Witte is merely cited for teaching the use of a sensor. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

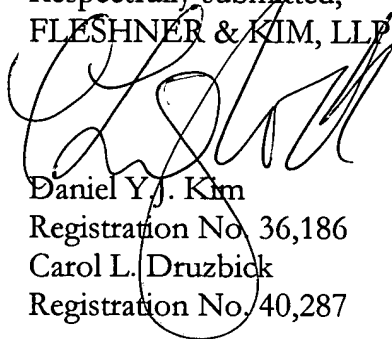
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, Carol L. Druzbeck, at the telephone number listed below.

Serial No. 09/987,379
Reply to the Office Action dated February 27, 2004

Docket No. MRE-0040

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
FLESHNER & KIM, LLP



Daniel Y. Kim
Registration No. 36,186
Carol L. Druzback
Registration No. 40,287

P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, Virginia 20153-1200
703 766-3701 DYK:CLD/kah
Date: May 13, 2004

Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610